



BRECON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

for the year 1949.

Officials. Medical Officer of Health.....T.C.R.George,
M.R.C.S.,L.R.C.P.,D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.....W.J.Rees,
Sanitary Inspector's
Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary
Inspector's Examination Joint Board;Meat and Other Foods
Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute;Diploma of the
Royal Institute of Public Health Hygeine.

Additional Sanitary Inspector..E.D.Grant,
Associate of the
Royal Sanitary Institute.Member of the Sanitary Inspector's
Association.

BRECON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILReport of the Medical Officer of Health.1949

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions and the state of the public health in the Brecon Rural District for the year 1949.

The arrangement of the report is in accordance with the directions contained in Circular 2/50 (Wales), issued by the Welsh Board of Health.

Section 1. General and Vital Statistics.Statistical Summary for the year 1949.

Area.....	189,532 acres.
Population (Census 1931).....	8302.
Population (Estimated at Midsummer, 1949).....	7042.
Number of inhabited houses.....	2205.

Live Births.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate per 1000 Pop.
Legitimate.	54	53	107	
Illegitimate.	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	
	55	54	109	15.5

Still Births.	3	1	4	0.57
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Deaths from all causes.	38	31	69	9.8
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Maternal Deaths.....Nil.

Deaths under one year;

All infants.....2. Rate per 1000 live births.....18.

Legitimate infants.....2.

Deaths from special causes;

Infectious disease.....3.

Tuberculosis of respiratory system.....2.

Other tubercular disease.....1.

Cancer.....11.

Area.

The Rural District of Breconshire, which has an area of 189,532 acres, is a large district in the County of Breconshire. The district is situated mainly in the northern part of the County and consists of rather more than one third of the total size of the whole county.

The district is agricultural in nature and farming is the predominant occupation of the inhabitants.

There are no large towns in the area and the administrative offices are situated in the Borough of Brecon.

Population. Census. 1931.....8302

1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.
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7775.	8238.	7699.	7298.	6980.	7057.	7074.	7065.	7113.	7042.
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Brecon Rural District

The above figures are the Registrar General's estimated figures for the various years and apply only to the civilian population. It would appear that the population has dropped considerably since the last census was taken.

The number of inhabited houses in the district was 2205 giving an average number of 3.1 persons per house.

The total population was estimated to be 7145.

<u>Births.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	62.....	63.....	125.....	16.8
1941.....	51.....	50.....	101.....	12.2
1942.....	71.....	54.....	125.....	16.3
1943.....	52.....	57.....	109.....	14.9
1944.....	82.....	60.....	142.....	20.3
1945.....	53.....	52.....	105.....	14.8
1946.....	71.....	60.....	131.....	18.4
1947.....	58.....	68.....	126.....	17.8
1948.....	74.....	62.....	136.....	19.1
1949.....	55.....	54.....	109.....	15.5
England and Wales, 1949.....				16.7

It will be observed that the birthrate for the year under review was lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

Deaths.

After taking into account the outwardly and inwardly transferable deaths the net number of deaths registered amongst residents in the district is shown in the following table;

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	55.....	51.....	106.....	13.6
1941.....	45.....	58.....	103.....	12.5
1942.....	49.....	52.....	101.....	13.2
1943.....	40.....	49.....	89.....	12.2
1944.....	36.....	56.....	92.....	13.2
1945.....	51.....	55.....	106.....	15.0
1946.....	43.....	42.....	85.....	12.0
1947.....	41.....	39.....	80.....	11.3
1948.....	45.....	38.....	83.....	11.6
1949.....	38.....	31.....	69.....	9.8
England and Wales, 1949.....				11.7

The deathrate for 1949 was therefore lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales, and was the lowest recorded for many years.

<u>Still Births.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	4.....	1.....	5.....	0.6
1941.....	3.....	3.....	6.....	0.7
1942.....	6.....	3.....	9.....	1.1
1943.....	1.....	5.....	6.....	0.8
1944.....	0.....	2.....	2.....	0.3
1945.....	0.....	1.....	1.....	0.1
1946.....	1.....	4.....	5.....	0.71
1947.....	4.....	3.....	7.....	0.90
1948.....	4.....	4.....	8.....	1.1
1949.....	3.....	1.....	4.....	0.57
England and Wales, 1949.....				0.39

The stillbirth rate was higher than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

Infantile Mortality. This is the number of deaths occurring in children of under one year of age. The rate is calculated per 1000 live births.

	Males.	Females.	Total.	Rate
1940.....	6.....	5.....	11.....	88.
1941.....	6.....	3.....	9.....	89.
1942.....	3.....	3.....	6.....	48.
1943.....	0.....	1.....	1.....	9.
1944.....	2.....	4.....	6.....	42.
1945.....	3.....	4.....	7.....	66.
1946.....	1.....	1.....	2.....	15.
1947.....	3.....	4.....	7.....	55.
1948.....	4.....	1.....	5.....	36.
1949.....	2.....	0.....	2.....	18.
England and Wales, 1949.....				32

The infantile mortality rate was lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales.

<u>Analysis of Causes of Deaths.</u>	Males...38.	Females...31
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Tuberculosis Respiratory System.....	2.....	0.....
Other forms tuberculosis.....	1.....	1.....
Influenza.....	2.....	1.....
Cancer oesophagus.....	1.....	0.....
Cancer stomach.....	1.....	2.....
Cancer breast.....	0.....	1.....
Cancer all other sites.....	3.....	3.....
Intracranial vascular lesions.....	5.....	3.....
Heart Disease.....	11.....	13.....
Other diseases of circulatory system.....	0.....	1.....
Bronchitis.....	1.....	1.....
Pneumonia.....	0.....	2.....
Digestive diseases.....	1.....	1.....
Nephritis.....	2.....	0.....
Premature Birth.....	1.....	0.....
Congenital malformations.....	1.....	0.....
Suicide.....	0.....	1.....
Road Traffic accidents.....	2.....	0.....
All other causes.....	4.....	2.....

The deaths are classified under the headings given in the new Abridged List of Causes of Deaths.

Illegitimacy. The number of illegitimate births registered as belonging to residents in the district was 2.

Maternal Mortality. There was no death during the year which could be attributed to childbirth.

Section 2. General Provisions of Health Services.

Public Health Officers. During the year Mr W.J. Rees remained as your Sanitary Inspector. In addition, in October Mr E.D. Grant was appointed as an additional sanitary inspector.

Laboratory Facilities. During the year laboratory facilities were available at Cardiff, Newport, Carmarthen, Swansea, Aberystwyth and Brecon. Water samples were sent to the Public Analyst at Carmarthen and to the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff, whilst any investigation required in the control of infectious disease was performed by the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff. All the milk sampling was done by the National Milk Testing and Advisory Laboratory at Brecon and the Cardiff Laboratory, with the exception of milk tested for the presence of tuberculosis which was done at Cardiff.

Ambulance Facilities. As a result of the new National Health Service Act, 1946, certain changes became operative in the arrangements existing for the conveyance of sick persons in the district. The County Council are responsible for the provision of an ambulance service and make use of the existing St. John's ambulance for general use while ambulances from Merthyr Isolation Hospital conveyed patients suffering from infectious disease to hospital.

Home Nursing. Under the new Health Act, the County Council are responsible for the provision of home nursing facilities. The nurses previously partly employed by various district nursing associations are whole time employees of the County Council and district nursing associations, as such have ceased to function.

Treatment Centres and Clinics. Maternity and Child Welfare clinics administered by the County Council are held regularly in Brecon and Sennybridge. Ante-natal clinics and facilities for the treatment of minor ailments, immunisation, dental and eye defects and orthopaedic defects are available at the County Health Offices, Brecon. These are administered by the County Council.

Hospitals. The hospital needs of the residents of the district, for all diseases apart from infectious disease, are provided by the Brecon War. Memorial Hospital. A certain number of patients are also treated in the large hospitals situated in Cardiff and Swansea,

The arrangements for the treatment of infectious disease remain the same as in previous years. Merthyr Borough Council treat the patients from the district suffering from infectious disease and these are conveyed to Merthyr in ambulances maintained by Merthyr Borough Council. These arrangements are proving extremely satisfactory.

For the treatment of cases of smallpox arrangements have been made by the County Council with Aberdare for beds at the Fedw Hir Hospital.

Disinfection. In the main the methods used for any disinfection required have been fumigation and spraying.

Section 3. Maternity and Child Welfare.

These services are administered by the County Council and include clinics for maternity and child welfare, immunisation, dental treatment, orthopaedic treatment, visual defects and expectant mothers. Provision is also made for free and cheap rate milk and medicinal foods. The supervision of midwives, child life protection and the care of premature and illegitimate infants is also the responsibility of the County Council.

Brecon Rural DistrictSection 4, Sanitary Circumstances

Water Supplies. Water is derived for domestic and other purposes in the district from 32 Council supplies, private supplies, wells and springs.

Generally speaking, it is safe to say that the supply is poor, none of the supplies being chlorinated and only one filtered.

During the year, 165 inspections of public and private supplies were carried out. The water from public supplies was sampled on 44 occasions giving 21 satisfactory and 23 unsatisfactory results.

In the case of the unsatisfactory samples, investigations were made and remedial action carried out until check samples proved satisfactory.

54 samples of private supplies were taken and, of these, 38 were found to be satisfactory and 16 unsatisfactory. The majority of these samples were taken at the request of the Breconshire Agricultural Executive Committee in support of grant-aided schemes for the provision of water to individual premises.

In all cases the Committee and the owners of the supplies were advised of the results of the analyses.

The preparation of Engineering details etc. for the Council's major water scheme continued during the year but progress appears slow.

Water Supplies Improved, Augmented etc.

The following work has been carried out during the year.

1. Additional storage tank at Llanfillo.
2. Additional storage tank at Lower Chapel.
3. Provision and installation of a supply to Sarnau.
4. Extension of existing main at Llangorse to provide for the Council's new housing site.

Of the Council's 32 supplies only 11 can be considered adequate for the immediate needs of the inhabitants for domestic purposes, and only those of Sennybridge and Devynock, Llanfrynach, Treacastle and Llangorse are adequate for a proper drainage scheme.

It will be seen from the above that adequate and wholesome supplies of water are very badly needed and every effort is being made to complete the preparation of the major scheme.

Drainage and Sewerage. Modern Methods of sewage disposal, at least for the larger villages in the district, is still a matter of some urgency, the villages of Sennybridge and Devynock being the only ones with a sewerage scheme.

The sewerage scheme for Talybont was commenced during the year and is proceeding slowly but satisfactorily.

Preparatory details for sewerage schemes for the villages of Llangorse, Llanfrynach and Llanddew were continued during the year.

Number of visits paid by Sanitary Inspector.....76.
Number of new drains laid and tested.....6.

Public Cleansing. The Collection and disposal of household refuse has been carried out during the year by contract labour under the supervision of the Chief Sanitary Inspector. A comprehensive scheme for the removal of refuse is now therefore in operation throughout the district.

The Council is at present maintaining 4 refuse tips, i.e. Sennybridge, Treacastle, Llanfihangel-Tallylyn and Talybont. These are, however, filling rapidly and the securing of new tipping sites is likely to become urgent.

Sanitary Inspection of the area. The sanitary inspection of the area was undertaken by the Chief Sanitary Inspector, Mr W.J. Rees, and the additional Sanitary Inspector, Mr. E.D. Grant.

The following summary gives information relating to the work of the sanitary inspector during the year.

Nuisances.

Number of complaints received.....	81.
Number of complaints investigated.....	81.
Number of premises inspected.....	61.
Number of preliminary notices.....	20.
for (a) Structural defects.....	12.
(b) Sanitary defects.....	8.
Number of statutory notices served.....	0.

There has been great difficulty during the year in carrying out repairs owing to the limited supply of building materials. At present repair work is largely of a patching nature and it is to be hoped that a greater supply of material will soon be available for the repair of domestic property to prevent decent property deteriorating.

Houses let in Lodgings. It is not considered that any of the houses in the district are of such a nature to require control under byelaws made under section 6 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Offensive Trades. There are no offensive trades in the district.

Common Lodging Houses. There are no common lodging houses in the district.

Licensed Premises. Number of visits made by Sanitary Inspector..59.
 Number of complaints.....8.
 All the complaints were remedied by informal action.

Shops. Number of inspections made.....65.

Factories. A complete survey of the factories in the district was carried out with the following results:-

a. Factories in which the provisions relating to cleanliness, overcrowding, temperature etc. are enforceable by the Council.....	9.
b. Factories in which the provisions relating to sanitary conveniences only are enforceable by the Council.....	17.
Total number of factories.....	26.
Total number of inspections made.....	86.
Total number of defects found.....	5.
Number of defects remedied.....	5.

Tents, Vans and Sheds. Number of visits made.....82.

Eradication of bed bugs and Steps taken to combat infestation.

Any premises found as a result of inspection or complaint to be infested with bed bugs or other vermin is treated with D.D.T. preparations which have been found to be very successful.
 No premises were found infested during the year.

7/ Rodent Control. Mr.J.C.Reynolds is still employed as the Rodent Officer to carry out the work of rodent destruction under the supervision of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.
Details of the work carried out are given below;

Number of premises inspected.....	263
Number of premises found infested.....	79.
Number of notices served.....	Nil.
Number of premises treated by Rodent Operator.....	74.
Number of premises treated by occupier.....	5.
Estimated number of rats killed during the year.....	1057.

Sewer Treatments during the year.

- Sennybridge - Two Maintenance treatments were carried out in May and December.
- Devynock - Two maintenance treatments carried out.

Section 5. Housing.

a. Council Housing Schemes. The following indicates the number of houses completed by the Council during the year.

Llangorse.....	6.)	
Sennybridge.....	10.)	Total 32.
Talybont.....	16.)	

In addition the following schemes being the first half of the second programme are being undertaken and detailed drawings are being prepared.

Llanfrynach.....	6.	Felinfach.....	4.
Llangorse.....	6..	Llanfillo.....	4.
Trecastle.....	6.	Lower Chapel.....	4.
Llanddew.....	6.	Cray.....	6.
Trallong.....	4.	Devynock.....	6.

b. Private Enterprise.

Number of houses completed and occupied.....	1.
Number of houses under construction.....	3.

Rural Housing Survey.

Following the appointment of Mr.E.D.Grant, the Rural Housing Survey was resumed on November 16th, and the progress from that date until the end of the year was as follows:-

Parish	Number houses inspected and category.					
	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Llanvern	0	6	7	5	4	22
Llanspyddid	7	5	8	9	1	28
Battle	5	9	7	5	2	28
Aberyscir	2	6	6	12	5	31
Totals	14	24	28	31	12	109

Section 6. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk. Considerable changes in the legislature governing the production of milk occurred during the year by the coming into operation on October 1st. of the Food and Drugs(Milk and Dairies) Act,1944.Briefly under this act the supervision of milk production on farms now passes to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and local authorities are left with the control of distributors.

Throughout the year 230 inspections were carried out at places of production and retail premises.

Up to October 1st, systematic sampling for submission for testing under the National Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme was continued and the result of samples taken were as follows:-

Category A	Milk	- good keeping quality.....	230.
" B	"	- doubtful keeping quality.....	7.
" C	"	- poor keeping quality.....	44.
Total samples taken.....			281

Since 1st. October sampling of milk under the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act 1938 has been instituted with the following results:-

Satisfactory samples.....	18.
Unsatisfactory samples.....	10.
Total samples.....	28

Eight samples of milk were submitted during the year for the presence of tuberculosis and all proved to be negative.

Meat. There is no slaughterhouse in the district. All meat is distributed from the Ministry of Food Slaughtering Depot in Brecon.

Food Condemned. The following foodstuffs were found to be unfit for human consumption and were destroyed:-

Meat (tinned).....	31½ lbs.
Sausages and sausage meat.....	20 lbs.
Cakes etc.....	3 lbs.

Food Preparation Rooms (including Bakehouses).

Number of inspections made.....	46.
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Ice Cream Premises.

Number of inspections made.....	78.
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Preserved Food Premises.

Number of inspections made.....	33.
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Fish and Fried Fish Shops.

Number of inspections made.....	11.
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Section 7. Prevalence and Control of Infectious Disease.

The following number of cases of notifiable infectious diseases were reported to me during the year:-

Acute Primary Pneumonia.....	1 case.
Measles.....	115 cases.
Scarlet Fever.....	1 case.
Puerperal Pyrexia.....	1 case.
Dysentery.....	4 cases.

As will be seen the district experienced quite a severe epidemic of measles during the year, the areas mostly affected being Cray, Trecastle and Sennybridge. The cases were all of a moderately mild type and no deaths were caused by any of the above notifiable cases.

No cases were removed to Merthyr Isolation Hospital during the year. The cases of dysentery all occurred among the members of one family and were of the mild Sonne type.

Venereal Disease. The County Council has an agreement with the General and Eye Hospital, Swansea, for the treatment of these cases.

The tracing of contacts and the following up of defaulters is the responsibility of the County Council.

Tuberculosis. The following details show the position as regards tuberculosis in recent years.

Number of cases on the register at commencement of year.....	29.
Number of fresh cases notified during the year.....	7.
Number of cases removed from register	
(a). Deaths.....	3.
(b). Left District.....	4.
(c). Recovered.....	3.
Number of cases remaining on register at end of year.....	26.

The number of cases notified in recent years is shown below:-

1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.
12.	9.	6.	9.	7.	4.	9.	5.	8.	7

Diphtheria Immunisation. As a result of the new Health Act, the County Council are responsible for the immunisation of children against diphtheria and details for the district will be found in the annual report of the County Medical Officer.

There were no cases of diphtheria in the district during the year.

In the preparation of this report I have endeavoured to deal briefly with all matters within my responsibility regarding public health and preventive medicine and I have included all the subjects specifically requested by the Welsh Board of Health.

Yours faithfully,

T.C.R. George,

Medical Officer of Health.

